

This is part of a letter Olander sent to Sec'y Redfield last December:

"On a trip Aug. 1, 1914, on the Christopher Columbus of the Goodrich line, I noticed every one of eight large gangways in such condition they could not be closed quickly in event of accident. None can be closed properly in the condition they were in that day.

"Most of the compartments of this vessel are open on the main deck, to which these gangway leads. This is a case of, in my opinion, almost criminal neglect. If, during a stoppage of engines in bad weather, she got into a trough of the sea, she would fill herself through her open ports. Of the 50 or 60 bolt holes in each gangway some are entirely plugged so that bolts can not be put in at all, and the threads in most of the others are filled with rust and paint. They have been in this condition for some time yet inspectors pay no attention to it."

He suggested that if inspectors went aboard they would get "a startling illustration of the extent to which carelessness and neglect have been permitted." He added gangways ought to be put in shape to be closed quickly to prevent rapid rush of water inside the ship in case of a lurch like that of the Eastland.

"Quick closing gangways would have stopped the inrush of water sufficiently to have saved scores of people who were trapped in the interior of the vessel," said Olander.

"It was through unfastened hatches that the Monroe filled with water so quickly after her collision off the Virginia capes last winter," reads another letter to Sec'y Redfield. "Practically every passenger vessel on the Great Lakes is in far worse shape in the matter of hatches and gangways than was the Monroe. The steamboat inspection service has seen fit to ignore this condition. In the case of the Christopher Columbus they ignored it deliberately after their at-

tention had been called to the dangerous condition of the vessel."

Olander points to recent narrow escapes from slaughters like that in the Eastland. The City of Chicago caught fire in September, 1914, and was able carry her cargo of 250 passengers safely in. Had the fire broken out an hour earlier the 250 would have gone to the bottom of Lake Michigan, according to Olander, because of a short-handed crew.

The Pere Marquette No. 18 went down in 1910 and 26 sailors were drowned. A week before the same boat had been loaded with 2,000 men, women and children on a gay excursion.

"If the fate of that boat had come one week earlier there would have been a death list that would have shaken the indifference of the public and of legislators," said Olander.

"It required the Iroquois fire to wake Chicago to proper regulation of theaters. It required crashing buildings and many deaths to secure a building department which has power to suppress dangerous conditions."

The American Bureau of Shipping, which calls itself the "American Lloyds," is the only organization which has studied and fixes a standard of "stability," that is, whether a boat is topheavy, like the Eastland. Inspector Nicholas of the U. S. Steamboat Service said the federal government takes all its technical standard on "stability" from this bureau. Nicholas produced a big gilt-edged book gotten out by this bureau.

"This tells how to find out whether a vessel is topheavy like the Eastland?" asked the reporter.

"Yes," said Nicholas.

"Can you name any vessels running out of Chicago to which these standards have been applied by the bureau or by insurance companies or by anybody else?"

"The federal bureau has not examined the hull of the Eastland or any other vessel as to its stability,